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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT WORKS WITH COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT HEALTH CARE PLAN FOR VAUGHAN

LHIN To Advise Government On New Hospital Services In Vaughan

VAUGHAN - The McGuinty Government is supporting planning for new hospital services to start in the Vaughan community, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"Planning for new hospital services in Vaughan needs to happen," Smitherman said. "Vaughan is a growing area and we're responding to the health care needs of the community to improve access to quality health care."

This announcement will allow the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), which includes Vaughan, to work in conjunction with stakeholders and the Vaughan Health Care Foundation to conduct planning for health care services in one of the fastest-growing communities in the province.

"This marks an important first step to ensure that any hospital in Vaughan will meet the needs of our community now and in the future," said Greg Sorbara, MPP for Vaughan-King-Aurora. "Together, with community residents and leaders, we are moving forward for a healthier Vaughan."

The LHIN's work will include advice to the government on hospital capital planning and future hospital operations.

"We are delighted the government is supporting the health service needs of the Central LHIN community," said Hy Eliasoph, CEO of the Central LHIN. "This first step will help move us in the right direction towards understanding and meeting the needs of Vaughan and surrounding areas."

Central LHIN is responsible for planning, coordinating, integrating and funding health services in the Central LHIN area as of April 1st, 2007 and is one of 14 LHINs in Ontario.

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is taking the health care needs of Ontarians seriously. Other initiatives include:

- Investing $5 billion in modernizing and expanding health care facilities by 2010 to meet the needs of the province's growing and aging population;
- Reducing wait times for five key health care services (hip and knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures);
- Investing $143 million in an Emergency Department Action Plan, which contains system-wide solutions to ensure emergency rooms stay open and increase capacity in the health care system to meet the needs of Ontario patients.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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